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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1874
INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/USDOJ WASHDC PRIORITY
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 8429

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DEPT FOR E, P, EB, EAP/J, EAP/P, EAP/PD, PA;
WHITE HOUSE/NSC/NEC; JUSTICE FOR STU CHEMTOB IN ANTI-TRUST DIVISION;
TREASURY/OASIA/IMI/JAPAN; DEPT PASS USTR/PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
SECDEF FOR JCS-J-5/JAPAN,
DASD/ISA/EAPR/JAPAN; DEPT PASS ELECTRONICALLY TO USDA
FAS/ITP FOR SCHROETER; PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR;
CINCPAC FLT/PA/ COMNAVFORJAPAN/PA.

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [ELAB](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 02/21/08

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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, February 20

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
February 21, 2008

08:22

Attended a meeting of cabinet ministers connected with measures for small business at the Kantei.

09:10

Met Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Ono.

10:01

Attended a Lower House Financial Affairs Committee meeting.

12:08

Attended a cabinet luncheon meeting at the Kantei.

13:21

Met Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Futahashi.

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14:35

Met Ono, Deputy Foreign Minister Sasae, AND Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau Director General Saiki.

15:18

Met former Justice Minister Nanno, followed by executive committee chairman Toshihiko Kuwashima and others of the national small retailer's summit.

16:04

Met Indonesian regional assembly chair Ginandjar, followed by Vice Foreign Minister Yabunaka, Resources and Energy Agency Director General Mochizuki. Afterward met Cabinet Intelligence Director Mitani.

17:27

Met Lower House member Takeshi Noda.

18:05

Met Environment Minister Kamoshita and Vice Minister Tamura.

18:43

Attended a foreign policy study meeting at his official residence.

Articles:

4) Prime minister calls for swift, new preventive measures

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
February 21, 2008

In the wake of the alleged sexual assault (on Feb. 10) against a junior high schoolgirl by a U.S. Marine, U.S. Forces Japan has imposed a lockdown on U.S. service members in Okinawa banning them from going out of their bases. In reaction, Prime Minister Fukuda last evening urged the U.S. military to come up with additional preventive measures, saying: "The question is how to build a system that can prevent a recurrence of such an incident. I would like to see Japan and the United States combine their innovative ideas to come up with new preventive measures swiftly."

At the same time, he gave high marks to the lockdown, saying: "The U.S. military is giving serious thought to the latest incident. I think the lockdown is an unusual step." The prime minister was responding to questions from reporters at the Prime Minister's Office.

5) U.S. serviceman held for allegedly raping Philippine woman in Okinawa

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Full)
February 21, 2008

U.S. military authorities took an Okinawa-based U.S. Army member into custody in the middle of this month on suspicion of assaulting a Philippine woman in Okinawa Prefecture, investigative sources revealed yesterday. The incident follows an Okinawa-based Marine's (alleged) rape of a local junior high school girl. The woman has filed a claim with Okinawa prefectural police. The prefectural police will seek an arrest warrant soon on a rape charge.

In Okinawa, a U.S. Marine was arrested only on Feb. 11 for allegedly

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raping a local junior high school student on Feb. 10. The U.S. military recently announced a plan to enforce stricter discipline. Soon after that, however, another rape took place. This fact could be a serious blow to the Japanese and U.S. governments in their ongoing review of preventive measures. The latest incident is likely to further damage local sentiment toward U.S. forces.

The Philippine woman's case occurred in the middle of this month in the central part of Okinawa's main island, according to sources familiar with the case. Police have yet to reveal anything specific about the factual circumstances. However, the prefectural police seem to be investigating the case. In addition to the junior high school student rape, there were other incidents involving U.S. military personnel. In Okinawa, a Marine was arrested for driving under the influence, and another Marine was held for trespassing after he was found passed out on a sofa in a private residence. The U.S. military locked down its bases in Okinawa yesterday morning to bar all Okinawa-based Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps personnel in principle, including civilian employees, from leaving their respective bases. The U.S. Marine Corps' Iwakuni base in Yamaguchi Prefecture has also taken similar action.

6) U.S. soldier held for assaulting Philippine woman

SANKEI (Page 29) (Full)
February 21, 2008

U.S. military authorities took an Okinawa-based U.S. Army member into custody in the middle of this month on suspicion of sexually assaulting a Philippine woman in Okinawa Prefecture, investigative sources said yesterday. The incident follows another Okinawa-based U.S. serviceman's alleged rape of a local junior high school girl. The woman has filed a charge with Okinawa prefectural police. The prefectural police will shortly seek an arrest warrant for the U.S. Army member on suspicion of raping the woman.

In Okinawa, a U.S. Marine was arrested only on Feb. 10 for his alleged rape of a junior high school student. There was another rape following the U.S. military's enforcement of stricter discipline. This fact could be a serious blow to the Japanese and U.S. governments in their ongoing studies of preventive measures.

The alleged rape of the Philippine woman took place in mid-February in the middle part of Okinawa's main island, informed sources said. Anything specific about the crime has yet to be fully revealed, but the prefectural police appear to be investigating the incident.

In addition to the rape of a junior high school student, a Marine was arrested over drunken driving and another Marine was held for trespassing after he was found passed out on a sofa at a private residence.

7) U.S. military begins indefinite lockdown in Okinawa, Iwakuni

SANKEI (Page 29) (Full)
February 21, 2008

The U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa has been enforcing stricter discipline based on educational programs for its troops in the wake of an Okinawa-based Marine's alleged rape of a local junior high school girl. That incident was followed by other incidents involving U.S. military personnel. In Okinawa, a Marine was arrested recently

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over drunken driving and another Marine was held for trespassing after he was found drunk and passed out on a sofa at a private residence. The U.S. military yesterday locked down its bases in Okinawa to bar all U.S. military personnel and civilian employees in principle—including Army, Navy, and Air Force members—from going out of their bases for "period of reflection."

Meanwhile, the U.S. Marine Corps' Iwakuni Air Station in Yamaguchi Prefecture and Camp Fuji in Shizuoka Prefecture have also banned their troops from leaving base.

According to the Marine Corps press division, all Okinawa-based Marines are forbidden to leave their respective bases, except for going on official duties or otherwise going to chapels or medical facilities. There are U.S. servicemen living in off-base private housing like a Marine staff sergeant who was arrested for the alleged rape of a junior high school student. They are also forbidden to leave their homes, except for their duties.

8) Both appreciation and concerns exist in Okinawa, Iwakuni

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)
February 21, 2008

U.S. Forces Japan has imposed a total lockdown on all U.S. service members in Okinawa and the Marines at the Iwakuni base (Iwakuni, Yamaguchi Prefecture). The unusual step has drawn a positive reaction in Okinawa, where a rash of incidents involving U.S. service members has occurred. At the same time, puzzlement has been expressed by store owners and others in entertainment districts that are frequented by U.S. servicemen.

The Okinawa prefectural government office received a letter yesterday morning from Lt. Gen. Richard Zilmer, regional coordinator of U.S. forces in Okinawa, reporting on the decision to impose a lockdown. Governor Hirokazu Nakaima told the press: "I have a strong impression that (the U.S. military) has acted speedily. I expect (the U.S. side) to take all possible measures. The task of producing preventive measures still lies ahead. I would like to see strict enforcement of measures." The prefectural government had no plan to ask the U.S. military for a lockdown, viewing it as a matter for the U.S. military to decide.

Meanwhile, new Iwakuni Mayor Yoshihiko Fukuda, who conditionally supports the controversial plan to relocate a U.S. carrier-based air wing to the base in the city, raised a question, saying: "A lockdown alone will not be effective. I believe other things should be done." "I wonder how long it is going to last," said the 28-year-old manager of a Mexican restaurant near JR Iwakuni Station. Some 70 PERCENT to 80 PERCENT of the restaurant's customers are U.S.-military-affiliated people. Moritoshi Nagamine, 68, who has long been running a bar near the base, said with a sigh: "A total lockdown has never been imposed. The local damage is immeasurable."

9) USFJ to tighten requirements for military personnel to live off-base as part of measures to prevent recurrence of crimes committed by military personnel

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
February 21, 2008

An overall picture became known yesterday of the measures being

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coordinated between the Japanese government and the United States Forces Japan (USFJ) in order to prevent a recurrence of similar incidents to the recent alleged rape of a junior high school girl by a U.S. Marine in Okinawa. The main features of the measures include: (1) tightening the requirements for the U.S. military personnel to live off-base and conducting a survey of the actual situation (of U.S. military personnel living off-base), and (2) patrolling by U.S. military officers and Okinawa Prefectural Police officers. The central government will present these measures to the Okinawa prefectural government by the end of the week and then enter into final coordination with the prefectural government and the Okinawa

police.

Given that the recent alleged sexual assault was committed by a Marine living off-base, the preventive measures focus on tightening the regulations that allow military personnel to live off-base. Specifically, U.S. military personnel will be strictly screened as to their past problematic behaviors when they apply for permission to live off-base. In addition, in order to respond to the strong criticism that the actual state of officers and soldiers living off-base is unclear, a survey will be conducted to grasp how many U.S. military personnel live outside the bases, and the results will be shown to local municipalities.

At present U.S. military personnel patrol the areas near the Kadena Air Base late at night to give "daily life guidance." The proposed joint patrol would have prefectural police officers join this patrol program. From now on, the patrol would be more frequently conducted and the areas to be patrolled would be broadened.

If an incident or an accident occurs while on patrol, "The prefectural police's authority to detain U.S. military members would precede the U.S. side's," a senior Foreign Ministry official said. The U.S. military police would not join the patrol.

U.S. military personnel at certain ranks or above or those who live with their families are allowed to live off-base. The number of those military personnel is on the increase in part because of convenience for shopping and leisure-time activities. In Okinawa, some 5,000 households (as of last September) are said to live off-base.

10) U.S. side imposes lockdown on service members ahead of government's request, raising question about effectiveness of future preventive measures

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
February 21, 2008

In the wake of a series of improprieties by U.S. service members, such as the alleged sexual assault (on Feb. 10) against a junior high schoolgirl by a U.S. Marine in Okinawa, U.S. Forces Japan in a rare move yesterday imposed a total lockdown on its service members. The U.S. side made the move ahead of the Japanese government, which did not actively take action to prohibit U.S. military personnel from leaving their bases. The U.S. step has raised a question about the effectiveness of preventive measures to be produced later this week.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura indicated in a press briefing that he "appreciates" the step taken by USFJ. At the same time, he emphasized the posture of putting high priority on the

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production of preventive measures later this week, describing (the lockdown) as a "first step toward earnest talks" between Japan and the United States. Foreign Ministry Press Secretary Kazuo Kodama also said in a press briefing: "Work is underway to announce within this week a basic direction of preventive measures."

The latest step was taken under the initiative of the U.S. side, which was highly alarmed at the strong local outcry. Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba said before the House of Representatives Budget Committee on the morning of Feb. 29: "It is difficult for the Japanese government to request a lockdown (on U.S. service members) in principle." USFJ announced the lockdown about 12 hours later. Kantoku Teruya of the Social Democratic Party, who hurled a question at Ishiba, criticized the decision made without a request from the government, saying: "Nothing moves forward unless the U.S. military takes the initiative."

Activities by U.S. service members are affecting the local economy. There is a view that it is a strategy to wait for discontent to emerge from local people.

11) Delay in reporting Aegis vessel's accident reveals harmful effect of bureaucratic sectionalism in the Defense Ministry; Urgent

need for reform

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
February 21, 2008

The stir created by the delay in reporting to Defense Minister Ishiba and Prime Minister Fukuda the accident involving an Aegis destroyer, the newest member of the Maritime Self-Defense Force fleet is continuing to spread. The delay seems to have been caused by insufficient channels of communication between the internal bureaus of the Defense Ministry and senior levels of the joint chiefs-of-staff command. The discussion of organizational reform that the Prime Minister's Official Residence has been advocating is now likely to be drastically reviewed.

The collision of the destroyer and the fishing boat took place at 4:07 on the morning of the 19th. It took 41 minutes until the information was transmitted to the operations room from the site of the accident to the MSDF command and the joint command. At that point, neither the MSDF command nor the joint staff command informed the Defense Minister. At 5:00 AM, or 53 minutes after the accident occurred, contact was made with MSDF Chief of Staff Yoshikawa and the operations officers of the internal bureaus, but it was not until 5:40 AM or 93 minutes after the accident that Defense Minister Ishiba learned about it.

At a joint meeting of relevant defense-related committees of the Liberal Democratic Party yesterday, a torrent of criticism about the delay in contacting senior officials erupted. The harmful effect of bureaucratic sectionalism that separates the internal bureaus from the staff commands was pointed out.

12) Defense Ministry to replace MSDF chief of staff over Aegis ship accident

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Slightly abridged)
February 21, 2008

The Ministry of Defense (MOD) has begun coordination on replacing as
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early as March Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) Chief of Staff Eiji Yoshikawa, who is the top brass over the MSDF. The reasons lie with the crescendo of criticism of MSDF over the collision accident of an Aegis destroyer Atago with a fishing boat, and the subsequent delay in reporting to upper levels of the government.

Chief of Staff Yoshikawa was appointed to his post in August 2006. During his tenure last year, the incident of leakage of intelligence on the Aegis was discovered. In addition, there have been a series of unfortunate incidents in the MSDF, including the mistake in recording the amount of fuel supplied by a supply ship in the Indian Ocean, and then the cover up of the mistake, the fire aboard the destroyer Shirane, and the mistaken destruction of ship logs. The ministry is now coordinating on who will be his successor.

13) DPJ to demand resignation of Defense Minister Ishiba

ASAHI (Page 4) (Excerpts)
February 21, 2008

In a press conference yesterday, Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama sought the resignation of Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba to take responsibility for the collision between the Atago, an Aegis-equipped destroyer of the Maritime Self-Defense Force, and a fishing boat. He said: "He should resign as defense minister." Since the Japanese Communist Party, Social Democratic Party, and People's New Party also appear to be pursuing Ishiba on the collision incident, the defense minister's responsibility might become an issue facing the ruling parties, depending on the developments of investigations into the incident.

Hatoyama, in the press meeting yesterday in Shizuoka City, pointed out the Aegis destroyer's delayed action to avoid the collision. He also indicated that his party would soon call on Ishiba to quit his post to take responsibility for the collision incident, saying:

"(Ishiba) should feel seriously responsible. It will be difficult for him to remain in his post." SDP Chairperson Mizuho Fukushima also said in a press briefing: "He should resign to take responsibility for the serious incident."

When a mid-air collision occurred between an SDF fighter and ANA plane over Shizukuishi in Iwate Prefecture in 1971 and the Nadashio, a MSDF submarine, collided with the large-scale fishing boat No. 1 Fujimaru in 1988, the then Defense Agency chiefs stepped down from their post. Therefore, the largest opposition party intends to step up its pursuit of Ishiba.

14) Waves of criticism of Defense Ministry over Aegis collision

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Excerpts)
February 21, 2008

Yesterday the Defense Ministry came under criticism from the ruling and opposition parties over its belated action following the collision between the Maritime Self-Defense Force's Aegis-equipped destroyer and a fishing boat.

In a meeting yesterday of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's National Defense Division, many participants said that Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba should immediately go to the scene of the accident to hear from the family members of victims and those involved in the fisheries cooperative. Many also criticized the

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MSDF's delay in reporting the collision to the Defense Ministry. Former Defense Minister Yuriko Koike said: "Changing the organization and the method of communication would be a waste of time if rules are ignored."

One participant stressed: "A relationship of trust (with the Self-Defense Forces) is needed for debate on a permanent law that would allow the SDF's overseas dispatch."

In yesterday's LDP meeting, the Defense Ministry revealed that a MSDF crewmember first saw the fishing boat 12 minutes before the two vessels collided, not one minute before the collision. According to individuals connected with the matter, this information was not reported to Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda at the time when the meeting ended at 6:30 p.m.

New Komeito Secretary General Kazuo Kitagawa stated in a press conference yesterday: "The Defense Ministry should take appropriate action after shedding light on the truth."

Opposition parties are calling for the resignation of the defense minister. Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama said in a press conference in Shizuoka City: "The incident is serious. So it will be difficult for the defense minister to retain his post in light of it. I personally think that he should step down from his post." Social Democratic Party head Mizuho Fukushima also said: "Ishiba should resign."

15) Defense Ministry to review rules to require immediate reporting of incident and accident, reflecting on Aegis collision blunder

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
February 21, 2008

The Defense Ministry was slow to inform Defense Minister Ishiba of the collision between a Maritime Self-Defense Force Aegis-equipped destroyer and a fishing boat, in violation of its internal rule. Reflecting on this, the ministry decided yesterday to establish a new communication system in times of emergency. The ministry has so far focused mainly on cases involving security in setting up a communication system, but it will establish new rules so that information of an incident or an accident will also be immediately given to the defense minister and the Prime Minister's Office.

Ishiba stressed in a meeting of the Liberal Democratic Party yesterday: "I want to speed up work to overhaul the system of communication within the ministry." The current rule on reporting of

an incident or an accident to the minister within one hour is applied only in serious cases. Given this, the Defense Ministry plans to review the existing rules, including widening the scope of cases subject to the requirement of reporting to the minister, as well as to require the immediate reporting of such cases.

In the Aegis collision case, it is likely that responsible officers of the Maritime Staff Office and the Joint Staff were ignorant of the existence of the internal rule pertaining to what response should be taken when an accident occurs. The Defense Ministry will also review its communication manual, which sets different systems of communication from the Self-Defense Force and different communication methods for different cases.

16) Aegis accident: Responsible senior Maritime Staff Office officer

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did not know about rule on reporting to defense minister within one hour after accident

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Full)
February 21, 2008

A senior officer of the Maritime Staff Office's Operations Department responsible for dealing with accidents did not know the existence of the Defense Ministry's internal rule requiring that if a serious accident occurs, information be given directly to the defense minister's secretary, not to a relevant internal division, according to Defense Ministry officials yesterday. That was why it took as much as one and a half hours until Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba learned of the collision between a Maritime Self-Defense Force Aegis-equipped destroyer and a fishing vessel.

In the accident this time, since information was conveyed to the defense minister's secretary by the Operations Section first and then to the defense minister, Ishiba was informed of the accident one and a half hours after it occurred.

When a Chinese atomic-powered submarine intruded into Japanese territorial waters in November 2004, information from the Defense Agency to the prime minister was delayed. Reflecting on this, the Defense Agency worked out countermeasures. In September 2005, the agency classified accidents into three categories according to severity and specified to whom information of an accident should be given first in each category. In the case of an accident classified as the most serious accident, senior officers in the SDF department concerned are required to let directly a secretary to the defense minister know of the accident. But according to investigation by the ministry, since the senior Operation Department officer did not know about the rule, it was not followed. The rule also specifies that if an accident takes place, information should be given to the defense minister within one hour.

17) Question-and-answer session on Aegis ship accident set for tomorrow in Lower House Security Committee

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
February 21, 2008

The Lower House Security Committee held a board of directors meeting yesterday, in which both the ruling and opposition parties agreed to (1) hold a question-and-answer session tomorrow toward Defense Minister Ishiba and Foreign Minister Koumura, both of whom are to deliver a policy speech today respectively; and (2) hold intensive deliberations on Feb. 26 on reform of the Defense Ministry. The recent collision of the Maritime Self-Defense Force's Aegis destroyer and a fishing boat is expected to be put on the table for discussion.

18) Japan-ROK summit: Prime minister to sound out Seoul on possible resumption of EPA talks

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)
February 21, 2008

Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda yesterday decided to sound out Seoul on

the possibility of taking up three issues -- resuming the Japan-U.S.-ROK Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) to discuss North Korea, a bilateral Economic Partnership Agreement

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(EPA), and reciprocal visits between the top leaders of both countries -- during a summit with the new South Korean president to be held on the sidelines of his inauguration in Seoul. Those activities have been suspended during the Roh Moo Hyun administration.

Fukuda will leave Haneda Airport by government plane on the afternoon of Feb. 24. He will attend President-elect Lee Myung Bak's inauguration on the morning of the 25th and return home, after holding a summit with him in the afternoon.

The TCOG is a bureau-director-level forum established in 1999 for the purpose of Japan, the U.S. and South Korea cooperating on North Korea policy, mainly its nuclear program. However, official talks have not been held since June 2003.

That is because President Roh adopted a flexible policy toward Pyongyang. However, Lee intends to make a policy turnabout to strengthen ties among the three countries. Fukuda also intends to work on Lee for an early resumption of the TCOG in cooperation with the U.S.

EPA talks started in Dec. 2003. However, no talks have been held since November 2004, following a confrontation that occurred during talks to end tariffs.

Lee is expected to indicate during the summit his intention to visit Japan at an early time. The prime minister will welcome a visit to Japan.

Lee plans to visit the U.S. after a general election in the ROK on Apr. 9 and then come to Japan. He is expected to adjust his schedule to visit Japan with eye to late April.

19) Government to co-host climate meeting with U.S., coinciding with G-8: EU, China and India expected to join

NIKKEI (Top Play) (Excerpts)
February 21, 2008

The government has started coordination with the possibility of holding in conjunction with the G-8 Lake Toya Summit in Hokkaido in July a meeting of major economies to discuss global warming, involving more participants, such as China and India. Measures to address global warming are a major part of the summit agenda. Japan believes that more productive discussions would come about through parallel talks involving leaders from major emitters of greenhouse gas. It will co-host the envisaged meeting with the U.S. and aim at taking the initiative in talks on a framework to replace the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012.

The planned meeting, regarding which participation of heads of state will be considered, is a U.S.-led meeting of major economies to address energy security and climate change. The Bush administration, which has been viewed as negative toward efforts to combat climate change, has come up with the initiative with the aim of exercising its influence on the creation of a post-Kyoto Protocol framework. The participants will include 16 countries, such as European nations, the U.S., China and India, the European Union (EU) and the UN. The 16 countries and regions account for approximately 80 PERCENT of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

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The first meeting was held in Washington in September last year, bringing together foreign ministers. Participants in the second meeting, held in Hawaii in late January, agreed to hold a meeting of heads of state in mid-2008.

